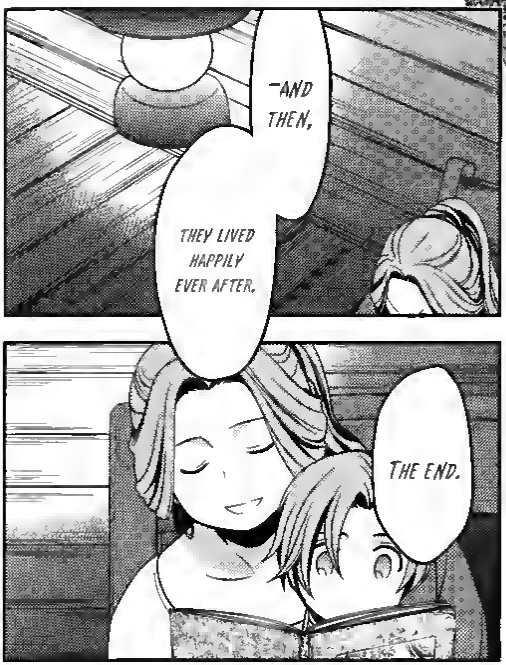
第10話
LA DECIMA STORIA

Caterina
OH.
I THOUGHT YOU'D COME.

WHOA, DON'T MAKE SUCH A SCARY FACE.
IT RUINS YOUR BEAUTY.
OH, PARDON ME.
DID YOU SUMMON ME JUST TO TELL ME THIS?
.....
YOU LEARNED SOMETHING YOU COULD NOT IGNORE. AND YOU HAVE BEEN ITCHING TO KNOW THE DETAILS.
WELL THEN, LET US STOP WASTING TIME AND GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.
DO YOU KNOW WHOSE GRAVE THIS IS?
Caterina
CATE--
!

...SO YOU HAVE HEARD ABOUT HER.
THAT'S RIGHT. THE ONE WHO SLEEPS HERE WITH ETERNAL SLUMBER IS PACE'S MOTHER.
BUT SHE'S NOT A BLOOD RELATIVE OF MINE.
TO PUT IT SIMPLY,
ME AND PACE ARE HALF-BROTHERS BORN TO DIFFERENT MOTHERS.
.....!
MOREOVER, PACE WAS BORN BEFORE ME TO THAT HOUSEHOLD.




AND THIS IS...

...WHERE ALL THE MISFORTUNE STEMMED FROM.

Pace,
do you want to stay here forever?
I don't really care where we're going to live as long as I get to stay with you, Mom.
hugs
Because my home is where you are.
Pace...
But I finally have a younger borther.
So I'm a bit sad to leave...
Indeed... There is Albert...
I like Albert!
But I hate Albert's mother.

She was kind in the beginning, but she's been so mean lately.
And she's been calling you names a lot, too, Mom.
Even Dad said to me, 'If only you hadn't been born!'
None of that is your fault, Pace.
You're a very good boy.
And to me, you're more precious than anyone...
But you know, if we stay in this house, there will be only more suffering waiting for us.
I will leave this house with you, Mom.

I WILL BE ALRIGHT.
AS LONG AS I GET TO BE WITH YOU, MOM, I WON'T SUFFER!
PACE...
--FATHER AND HIS FIRST WIFE, MY MOTHER, COULDN'T CONCEIVE CHILDREN FOR A LONG TIME.
BECAUSE OF THAT, FATHER TOOK A SECOND WIFE, CATERINA, AND SHE GAVE BIRTH TO PACE.
SOON AFTER, HOWEVER, I WAS BORN...

SHE LIVED THERE PRETTY MUCH IN POVERTY, AS FAR AS I HEARD.
CATERINA, MOST LIKELY, WAS AFRAID THAT HER SON WOULD BE DRAGGED INTO AN UGLY STRUGGLE FOR THE HEADSHIP OF THE FAMILY,
SO SHE LEFT, TAKING PACE WITH HER, AND FOUND SHELTER AT THE CHURCH OVER THERE
WITH MY MOTHER BY HIS SIDE, FATHER DIDN'T BOTHER TO SUPPORT THE TWO OF THEM IN ANY WAY,
TREATING THEM LIKE COMPLETE STRANGERS... NEEDLESS TO SAY THEIR LIFE WAS NOT EASY AND COMFORTABLE.
THE WAY MY MOTHER AND FATHER ACTED TOWARDS THE TWO IS NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE FORGIVEN
IN THE END... SOON AFTER CATERINA LEFT THE ESTATE, SHE FELL ILL AND PASSED AWAY.
...AWFUL. TREATING THEM LIKE THAT WHEN THEY WERE HIS FAMILY...
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.

Caterina
NO ONE FROM OUR HOUSEHOLD ATTENDED HER FUNERAL SERVICE.
SHE PASSED AWAY QUIETLY, WITH ONLY ONE FAMILY MEMBER WATCHING.
...TO ME, PACE WAS MORE OF A RIVAL THAN AN OLDER BROTHER.
PACE...
BECAUSE THAT'S HOW MY MOTHER HAD BEEN TEACHING ME TO LOOK AT HIM SINCE I WAS VERY LITTLE.

HOWEVER, NOW IT CHANGED.
IF IT'S POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE FOR HIM TO RETURN TO OUR FAMILY ESTATE.
AND ALSO, TO SUCCEED THE POSITION OF THE FEUDAL LORD. --I REALLY HOPE HE WILL.
MY OLDER BROTHER MAY BE A LITTLE FLIPPANT, BUT HE POSSESSES QUALITIES I LACK
LIKE POPULARITY AND CHARISMA TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO BE A CAPABLE RULER, THOSE ARE ESSENTIAL
...THE PROBLEM IS,
PACE SAYS HE DOESN'T WANT TO RETURN.

PUSHING THE JOB ONTO PACE JUST BECAUSE IT DOESN'T SUIT YOURSELF IS WAY TOO SELFISH OF YOU..!
THEN YOU JUST NEED TO PUT EFFORT IN ATTAINING WHAT YOU LACK TO BE A CAPABLE SUCCESSOR, SINCE IT'S YOU WHO WERE RAISED TO BE THE NEXT LORD IN THE FIRST PLACE!
ALBERT!
--SO HARSH, AREN'T YOU.
BUT ONE HARDLY HAS ANY CONTROL OVER WHAT THEIR STRONG AND WEAK POIN--

YOU'RE SEVERELY MISTAKEN IN YOUR VIEWS.
NEVER ONCE DID I THINK OF MYSELF AS UNFORTUNATE!
PACE...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SAYING THINGS THAT AREN'T YOURS TO SAY?!
MY CONNECTION TO THE ARCANA FAMIGLIA WAS BORN BECAUSE I CAME TO LIVE IN THAT CHURCH!
I AM WHERE I AM BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE I MYSELF DECIDED TO BE!
PACE. THE LORD'S SON HAD DIED THE MOMENT HE LEFT THAT MANSION!
!!

B-
BUT...
IF YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE USE OF ME TO SOOTHE YOUR GUILTY CONSCIENCE -- THEN SPARE ME, I REFUSE TO BE USED FOR THAT!
.....
OJOU, LET'S GO!
Y-
YOU'RE WRONG, PACE!

YOU'RE WRONG.
I...
.....
SORRY, OJOU.
I GOT YOU INVOLVED INTO THESE STRANGE DEALINGS.
I WON'T LET IT BOTHER ME.
OK.
DON'T LET HIS WORDS BOTHER YOU.
BETTER YET, JUST FORGET EVERYTHING HE SAID.

...THANK YOU, OJOU.
SOME DAY,
I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING MYSELF...
A FEW DAYS LATER

OJOU-SAMA!
WHY ARE YOU HERE..?
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO ASK. FOR ALL THREE OF YOU TO GATHER HERE TOGETHER
OH?
BAMBINA!
TODAY IS MY MOTHER'S ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH.
EVERY YEAR ON THIS DAY THE THREE OF US VISIT HER GRAVE.
Caterina
THE THREE OF US WERE KIND OF RAISED BY MY MOTHER, SO...
...RAISED, HUH.

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO ALWAYS PRAISED HER COOKING, SAYING HOW IT WAS YUMMY!
WELL... I DIDN'T SAY THE FOOD WAS BAD, DID I
IT'S JUST THE AMOUNT OF IT
Your food intake was the norm to her and that was all kinds of scary to us.
Yeah.
MORE LIKE SHE JUST FORCED THE FOOD DOWN OUR THROATS AGAINST OUR WILL.
DEBITO SIMPLY ISN'T HONEST WITH HIMSELF.
MUH... WHAT'S WITH THAT WAY OF PUTTING IT?
YOU, TOO, LUCA-CHAN!
WHY me?!
HEY, HEY, HEY, HEY.
WHAAT?! THOSE WHO BADMOUTH MY MOM'S COOKING WILL BE PUNISHED!
WITH LASAGNA! YOU WILL EAT IT UNTIL YOU CRY!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO LISTEN TO THE STORIES FROM EVERY-BODY'S PAST WHILE EATING SOMETHING DELICIOUS
WITH MY MOTHER'S HONOR AT STAKE, I WILL TEACH YOU TWO THE TRUE AWESOMENESS OF LASAGNA!
O-OJOU-SAMA, THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER!
HOW COME IT CAME TO THIS?!

E-EVEN YOU, OJOU-SAMA...
That's Ojou for you! She totally knows what I'm talking about!
HEY, HEY, BAMBINA ...
thumbs up
NICE ...
SO MANY FLOWERS.
Alrighty then!
Let's all go eat right now!
AT LEAST LET US WAIT UNTIL OJOU-SAMA IS FINISHED WITH HER PRAYER...
--Ah.
right!

THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN WANTING TO GIVE TO YOU BUT KEPT MISSING THE CHANCE TO.
OJOU, PLEASE ACCEPT THIS.
Gulaa!
Here.
This beautiful pendant is for you!
I found it inside the pirate ship I pulled out of the sea the other day.
Hmm so you know, that's how you normally obtain rare gold and all your treasures!
HEH YOU'RE PRESENTING HER SOMETHING YOU FOUND?
I'LL PUT IT ON FOR YOU, SO STAND STILL.
EH...?
DON'T BE SHY!

HM...
PERFECT!
Here, Mom, take a look, too!
P-PACE...
Ojou is so cute, right~?!

DITTO...
...SOMEHOW, I FIND THAT UNFORGIVABLE...
CATERINA WATCHING IS NO EXCUSE TO GO THAT FAR...
Next, should I get you a ring~?
.....
I-IDIOT!
IF WE'RE DONE WITH PAYING RESPECTS, THEN LET'S GO ALREADY!
ENOUGH! QUIT PLAYING AROUND IN FRONT OF A GRAVE!
grab
W-WAIT FOR ME~~~!
I mean!
AGREED. ALL HE CARES ABOUT IS EATING TEN PEOPLE'S WORTH OF FOOD, AFTER ALL.
GEEZ, REALLY, TRYING TO WORM HIS WAY INTO A GIRL'S HEART WITH A SECOND-HAND FIND. WHAT A CHEAPSKATE.

Catherina
THESE FLOWERS ...
HE CAME HERE...
HEEEY! HURRY IT UP!
AH!
GUYS, WAIT FOR MEEE --!

ArcanaFamiglia